

The Ohayo Post



Vol. 1, Issue 2

Serving the Yama Sakura 47 Community

January 26, 2005

Yama Sakura 47 officially begins

*By Sgt. James Sherrill
and Spc. Heather McLemore*

Lively music echoed through the north gym at Camp Higashi-Chitose, Japan, Tuesday during the opening ceremony which began Yama Sakura 47.

YS 47 is a high-tech computer-based simulation to improve U.S.-Japan military interoperability and reinforce their ability to work together in a military environment.

Soldiers from U.S. Army Japan, I Corps and more than 30 U.S. states, as well as members of the Japan Self-Defense Force, are participating in the exercise, making it one of the largest annual exercises in the Pacific theater.

Lt. Gen. Kenji Tokuda, commander of the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force's Northern Army, praised the interaction between the Japanese and Americans.

"The Yama Sakura exercise has enhanced mutual relationships between Japan and the United States," he said. "We have been able to conquer our language barrier and learn from each other."

Tokuda said everyone has come together for a valuable training experience.

"I look forward to learning from my bilateral partners ... to deepen our mutual understanding and trust," he said.

Also participating in the opening ceremony were Lt. Gen. James Dubik, I Corps commander, and Maj. Gen. Elbert N. Perkins, commander of USARJ and the 9th Theater Support Command.

Dubik and Perkins agreed with Kenji, and added that training with the Northern Army is significant because of its previous experience with real-world missions, such as the recent



Photo by Daisuke Sato

From left, Maj. Gen. Elbert N. Perkins, commander of U. S. Army Japan and 9th Theater Support Command, Lt. Gen. Kenji Tokuda, commander of Japan Ground Self-Defense Force Northern Army, and Lt. Gen. James Dubik, I Corps commander, shake hands at the Yama Sakura 47 opening press conference Tuesday.

tsunami relief in Southeast Asia and other deployments around the globe.

All are members of the Player Cell, or "blue units." They watch events unfold during simulated battles and skirmishes and react by moving their computer-created units accordingly.

While most of the JGSDF players are here in Japan, some of the U.S. players are thousands of miles away at Fort Lewis. They are connected to the exercise with a state-of-the-art satellite communication system.

The personnel who operate the simulator are members of the Army's Battle Command Training Program. The staff includes military personnel

and U.S. Department of Defense civilian contractors, many of whom are former or retired U.S. service members and experts in military doctrine.

They create both countries' simulated military units and place them in a digital world complete with buildings and terrain.

The BCTP staff also moves and commands the opposition force against the two allies.

"In the end, we are both on the same side," said Capt. Gary Evans with World Class OPFOR, a subsidiary of BCTP based at Fort Leavenworth, Kan.

"Our common goal is to create combat ready units together," he added.



Photo by Sgt. James Sherrill

Lt. Col. Louis Denato, a member of the YS 47 aid station staff, tests sample at the aid station located in the rear of Samurai Lounge.

Medics: 'Wash your hands'

Most Soldiers find having a four-inch cotton swab stuck in their nose a little uncomfortable, but the staff at the YS 47 aid station in the back of Samurai Lounge are just doing their jobs.

Army Reserve members of the 865th Combat Support Hospital, based in both Utica and Niagara Falls, N.Y., are screening Soldiers complaining of coughing, sneezing and tightness of the chest.

"Everything we are seeing is not out of the ordinary," said Lt. Col. Michael Kupiec, the officer in charge of the aid station during the exercise.

The staff screens personnel for infection using a quick, hand-held test that requires a sample to be taken from the nasal canal. Kupiec said most tests have been negative for the flu — with a few exceptions.

He explained that when Soldiers enter a cold, snowy environment like

Camp Higashi-Chitose and spend their days crammed together, it invites a number of ailments to take hold.

"We've been seeing headaches, chills and upper respiratory problems, but we expected it and are prepared for it," he said.

Lt. Col. Johnny Garnett, the acting U.S. surgeon for the Joint Forces Land Component Command during the exercise, said washing your hands, opening windows, cleaning common areas and sleeping head-to-toe are good ways to prevent getting sick.

"While there has been a slight increase in the number of respiratory ailments within the past few days, it happens during every exercise," Garnett said. "It's a cause for us to monitor the situation, but it's nothing we haven't seen before and we're well prepared to handle it."

Top U.S. Stories

Snowstorm strands travelers

BOSTON — A howling blizzard slammed the Northeast on Sunday with more than 2 feet of snow and hurricane-strength wind gusts, halting air travel for thousands of people, keeping others off slippery highways and burying parked cars under deep drifts.

Eagles fly past Falcons, Patriots bend Steelers

The Eagles ended their three-game losing streak in the NFC championship game by beating Atlanta 27-10 Sunday. Tom Brady and Bill Belichick were an unstoppable combination again for the New England Patriots, exposing all of the Steelers' weaknesses to end their 15-game winning streak and win the AFC championship 41-27 Sunday night.

'Tonight Show' pays tribute to Carson

BURBANK, Calif. - Johnny Carson, who hosted the Tonight Show on NBC for more than 30 years, died Sunday of complications from emphysema. He was 79.

(Stories compiled from AP)

CORRECTIONS

In the Jan. 22 issue, the name and unit of Staff Sgt. Larina Beltram with the 49th Personnel Services Battalion, were incorrect.

The Ohayo Post

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Photo by Sgt. Jeff Lowry

Akari Takano and Spc. Tammy Tinsley, a geo-spacial analyst with I Corps' 64th Engineer Detachment, play a hand-held game during a home visit to the Takano family home Saturday.

Soldiers trade goodwill for good meal

By Spc. Curtis Porter III

Japanese families invited U.S. Army Soldiers into their homes for dinner and an evening of cultural enlightenment Saturday and Sunday in the local community surrounding Camp Higashi-Chitose.

Japanese host families and U.S. military personnel held the goodwill gatherings to help foster good relations with each other.

"The home visits allow Soldiers to take part in a local cultural practice, a dinner party with a Japanese family, something the average person on the street might not ever be able to experience," said Lt. Col. Craig Haas, U.S. Army Japan liaison to the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force Northern Army.

Logistics Task Force 35's community relations office organized the program as part of the annual bilateral exercise Yama Sakura 47.

At some homes, host families spoke perfect English, and in other instances, Soldiers spoke the local language. One such Soldier was Spc. Kristyn Matsukawa, an administrative specialist assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, I Corps.

Matsukawa, a Japanese-Hawaiian born in Japan, left Japan when she was a toddler, and said her visit was very emotional.

"I almost cried because my host family welcomed me back like I was a long-lost relative," she said.

Other Soldiers experienced the same hospitality from their host families.

"As soon I walked in the door, I was given a *kimono* to try on," said Spc. Annebel Ortega, a human resources specialist with the 82nd Rear Operations Center. "It was so beautiful."

Ortega's host family allowed her to take back a *kimono* as a souvenir.

Spc. Tammy Tinsley, geo-spacial analyst, 64th Engineer Detachment, I Corps, said she appreciates Japanese hospitality.

"They are some of the nicest, open and caring people I have come across," she said.

"The home visit program is about exploring the unknown," said Haas. "There are a lot of misconceptions the Japanese have about Soldiers. We've found the home visits have been a great way for us to change perceptions."

Ambassadors visit mentally challenged

By 1st Lt. Joshua Preston

As part of a community outreach effort, about 20 U.S. Soldiers and civilians and 25 Japan Ground Self-Defense Force members visited Chitose Izumi Gakuen, a school for the mentally challenged, and two satellite campuses on Japan's northern island of Hokkaido.

They participated in games and activities alongside the school's pupils.

"Learning about their whole culture is what I want to take away from this experience," said Pfc. San Juanita Washington, a topographical analyst in the 64th Engineer Detachment based in Fort Lewis, Wash. "At the school, I get to learn what they do. I get to interact with them," she said.

Washington joined the U.S. Army in 2003, and 18 months into her enlistment the 19-year-old Soldier is in Japan on

her first overseas assignment.

Washington is participating in the annual Yama Sakura exercise, and trips like this give Soldiers the opportunity to experience Japanese culture.

More than 70 students and administrators welcomed their Japanese and American guests to the school, which is set in the snow-covered mountain landscape outside Camp Higashi-Chitose.

At the school Americans immersed themselves in the art of *origami*, folding paper into shapes and animals.

They also practiced their calligraphy by writing in *kanji*, the Chinese characters used in the Japanese language.

"This is an opportunity to do some community service with our foreign national counterparts and show appreciation for inviting us to their country," said 1st Lt. Stanley Branch, commander of the 349th Chemical Company, an Army Reserve unit based in Seattle.

Branch and the students played *fuku-warai*, a game popular in Japan during the New Year.

Blindfolded participants try to place game pieces shaped like facial features on a blank face.

"The students

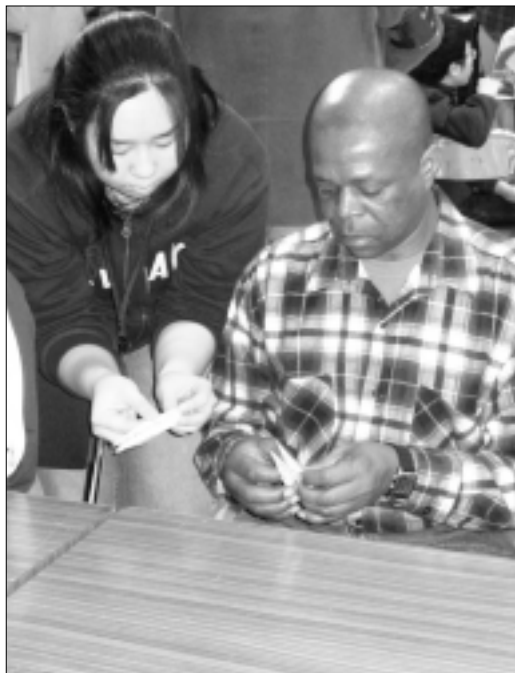


Photo by Maj. Chris Dockery

Master Sgt. Stanley Hodge, with the 476th Chemical Battalion, practices origami.

come to the facility to not only play games and have fun but to learn skill sets," said Tatsuo Hayakawa, a coordinator for the volunteer community outreach program.

While practicing tapestry, the guests learned that the students make cloth products to help financially support the school and its services. The school also owns land so students may learn how to farm.

Because gift-giving is a prominent custom in Japanese culture, the students gave all the guests small cloth coasters as presents.

"Here in this area, this is one of the few opportunities these people have to interact with Americans," Hayakawa said.

Soldiers have participated in community outreach programs during the past few Yama Sakuras.

"This is one of the lasting impressions I will have of the country," Washington said.

"I never set foot outside North America before this trip, and I will never be the same again."



Photo by 1st Lt. Joshua Preston

Pfc. San Juanita Washington, a 64th Engineer Detachment topographical analyst, weaves a tapestry as Izumi Gakuen pupils watch.

JGSDF, U.S. female NCOs exchange ideas

Spc. Sarah Wilkins
I Corps Public Affairs

They came from different backgrounds, militaries and cultures, but all the women who sat down together for a Yama Sakura 47 tea ceremony had at least one thing in common – they all persevered to successfully climb the noncommissioned officer ranks.

American and Japanese women from various career fields and ranks gathered at Camp Higashi-Chitose to learn about each others' personal lives, job responsibilities and military attitudes.

"Women have come a long way in the military everywhere," said Command Sgt. Maj. Carmi Eichhorn, from the Army Reserve Troop Program Unit. "Hopefully, we can share those opportunities and those ideas."

Japanese women have also come a long way. The first female sergeant major in the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force said she hoped to serve as an example for others to follow.

"I have a strong pride to educate the people," said Sgt. Maj. Midori Yashima, an educational company sergeant major in the Northern Army, through an interpreter.

"We believe that we have to broaden our view," she said. "When you come here, we can talk with your country's female people."

While drinking tea and eating delicacies, the uniformed women talked about the difficulties and rewards of serving their countries.

The female soldiers from both countries looked beyond the uniforms to see the similar issues they had all faced – raising families, striving to succeed in their chosen career fields and gaining respect from military peers.

"This tea ceremony is like the



Photo by Spc. Sarah Wilkins

Sgt. Maj. Midori Yashima, an educational company sergeant major in the Northern Army, talks to Command Sgt. Maj. Carmi Eichhorn with the Army Reserve Troop Program Unit through an interpreter during a tea ceremony.

beginning of our friendship," said Yashima. "I am very happy...that we have such a great opportunity to speak with you."

American NCOs to meet with their Japanese counterparts.

"This is a powerful session – be really genuine and just be yourselves," he said.

While the YS 47 exercise does focus on improving joint military cooperation, the leaders have an added objective for bringing the militaries together.

The women accomplished that goal – they helped improve foreign relations and cultural understanding by sitting down together to talk about their lives, goals and accomplishments.

By improving those ties, they worked toward forming lasting, favorable impressions that will ultimately aid both countries in future military exercises.

"Thank you for the opportunity to meet with all of you, and I hope we can do more in the future," said Sgt. Maj. Ute Harris, I Corps Religious Support Team. "I will never forget it."

"Women have come a long way in the military everywhere. Hopefully, we can share those opportunities and those ideas."

Command Sgt. Maj. Carmi Eichhorn
Army Reserve Troop Program Unit

Mingling from group to group, the women made the important step of moving beyond a military exercise to connect with each other on a personal level.

"There's a lot of good that's going to come out of this...you bring credibility to our NCO corps," said Command Sgt. Maj. Raymond Gutierrez, I Corps Special Troops Battalion, who hand-picked the

Slide to the right

35th S&S Soldiers learn cold weather driving

By *Spc. Curtis Porter III*

High speeds, twisting turns, the roar of power engines, and bone-jarring impacts may sound like the newest thrill ride at an amusement park, but for Soldiers of Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 35th Supply and Service Battalion, it was a high-speed way to be introduced to cold weather convoy training.

On an icy, unused runway at Camp Higashi-Chitose, the unit learned how to maneuver their vehicles in icy conditions.

"We're an active duty unit, and we hardly ever get an opportunity to train on convoy operations in snow and ice conditions with our vehicles," said Capt. Dan Reichard, commander of the 35th.

Reichard went on to say that skid training allows the drivers to gauge their reactions and experience the effects

of skidding by self-inducing slides and then utilizing high speed breaking maneuvers.

Soldiers in the unit participated in the training session using both Humvees and Light Medium Tactical Vehicles.

"I was scared when I got behind the wheel and started moving, and I screamed when the vehicle started sliding, but I said to myself, 'Hey here I go, let's do it,'" said Spc. Oak S. Baac, the operations administrative specialist for the 35th.

"I never had a driving experience like this before, so I think it's good for all of us to learn how we would react under these conditions," Baac said.

Although the unit is here for the YS 47 exercise, the training they received Monday will be tested during a field training exercise being held next month.

Morale was very high among the soldiers of the unit despite the cold temperatures, even for a Soldier originally from the Sun Belt town of Decatur, Ga.

"I was so excited. I've lived in Pennsylvania, so I've driven in the snow, but this is my first time in a Humvee. If it wasn't so cold I would've really had fun," said Pvt. Shedrieka Maddox, the personnel administrative assistant, while enduring below freezing temperatures.

The 23-year-old said he's only problem during her driving run was when she navigated the obstacle course and ran over a cone.

The skid training did give one 35th Soldier a new perspective on training Soldiers.

"It's great that we're going to have more Soldiers trained up on driving in these kind of conditions. This really makes us more versatile and gives younger Soldiers a great opportunity to become more involved and actively participate in unit training," said Sgt. James Olivas, a light wheel vehicle mechanic with the 35th.

"We have these bilateral exercises all year long and only had a few drivers trained on convoy operations," Olivas said. "Now we can spread the work and give everyone a chance to step up participate with our counterparts."

Snow, ice make safety a priority

By *1st Lt. Joshua Preston*

A Soldier at Camp Hagashi-Chitose stepped off the shuttle bus this past week, and when his foot hit the ground he lost his balance. After receiving seven stitches on the back of his head, which made contact with the bus steps, the Soldier returned to duty.

This recent accident is an example of the dangers the snow- and ice-covered landscape poses. There are some precautions Soldiers may take while at Yama Sakura. Soldiers not accustomed to a cold-weather environment may help ensure their safety and the safety of others by keeping the below safety guidelines in mind.

- ◆ Snow and ice are the biggest safety hazards. Snow covers virtually the entire landscape, and ice patches are on the roads and sidewalks. Slip-on cleats for footwear are available at the Camp Exchanges for about a 1000 yen.

- ◆ Icicles on rooftops are a hazard when they break and fall, and standing outside doorways without overhangs increases risk

of injury if this occurs.

- ◆ Use of kerosene lamps in tents and buildings should be monitored, ensuring that there is plenty of ventilation to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning. Also, kerosene heaters should be clear of any objects so no fires occur.

- ◆ Vehicle safety, including driving on the correct side of the road, is essential. Increasing driving distances in the snow might prevent accidents. Pedestrians often walk on the road, so be aware of the environment when driving.

- ◆ Hydrate while at Yama Sakura. Soldiers might not be aware that they may become dehydrated even though they are in a cold-weather environment.

- ◆ Dress warmly even if traveling short distances on foot outside. Wear loose layers of clothing to allow for ventilation.

For more information regarding safety issues, contact Donald Paglioni, USARJ safety officer, at 903-577-4803.

It should be noted, the bus was undamaged during the incident.

Ice breaker: East meets West

By Spc. Curtis Porter III

U.S. Army personnel and Japan Ground Self-Defense Force members at Camp Higashi-Chitose engaged in a friendly ice sculpture contest during Yama Sakura 47.

The top enlisted personnel of the two organizations initially wanted to begin the bilateral contest during YS 43.

"This Yama Sakura, we were finally able to get the blocks of ice here and the Soldiers to provide the muscle to carve them," said Command Sgt. Maj. Ray Gutierrez, I Corps Special Troop Battalion's top enlisted Soldier.

Spc. Marc Paul Susa, a food services specialist, I Corps Special Troop Battalion, said he thought this opportunity was a great idea.

"I came in for work and the sergeant major told me I was going to be working on these giant ice sculptures. I didn't know what to expect, but this was really big," said. Susa, who added that he was chosen because of his culinary ice-carving skills.

He spent more than 30 hours working and leading the project for the I Corps team.

All of the Soldiers were under the tutelage of JGSDF ice sculpture



Photo by Staff Sgt. Neil C. Jones

Sgt. Tsutomu Hayashi, a JGSDF Northern Army member, carves a snow sculpture during YS 47 at Camp Hagashi-Chitose.

masters Sgt. Maj. Kazuma Etoh and Master Sgt. Shimichi Mishiro, both with the Northern Army's 11th Tank Battalion.

"I've designed ice sculptures for the annual snow festival, and they are very big, at least 17 feet tall and 30 feet wide," said Etoh.

"For seven years, I learned how to shape the ice, and now I am a

master," he said.

Made from ice and snow, the ice sculptures are not easily missed. Each is as large as a small car.

Under Etoh's watchful eye, the teams worked on their projects in cold temperatures in an environment of comradery.

The ice sculptures can be viewed behind the main JGSDF PX.

Finance office cashes in at Friendship Hall

By Sgt. James C. Sherrill

The finance office personnel in Friendship Hall are giving away yen. They'll give any U.S. Soldier 1,040 of them as long as they get \$10 in return.

Sgt. Anthony De Armas and Sgt. 1st Class Anthony Williams, both U.S. Army Japan Soldiers stationed in Okinawa, are assigned to the Logistics Task Force 35 finance office during YS 47. The office staff hand out about one million yen a day from their kiosk, according to De Armas. That's about \$10,000.

When a Soldier comes in to exchange dollars, De Armas and Williams count the yen, log it into a computer and have the Soldier recount it in front of them to make sure no one gets short-changed during the transaction.

"The cash we have ultimately comes from the U.S

Treasury, which is deposited in an account at a local bank where we get the yen," De Armas explained.

The office will also take a check, as long as it's not for more than \$300, and the limit is two checks during the exercise. However, the checks must be drawn from a valid account, or the amount cashed will be deducted from the Soldier's pay. There's no need to make the checks out to anyone because there's a rubber stamp available.

All Soldiers must have proper identification to exchange their money, and the staff won't take yen back in exchange for dollars. The finance specialists recommend not getting more cash than can be spent while in Japan.

The finance office is open Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from noon to 9:30 p.m., and Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. The office is closed from noon to 1 p.m. every day.

Chaplain's Corner

Living in the dark

By Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Dennis Newton

When I was serving in the infantry, we were in the midst of a maneuver. Several objectives were given to our battalion to seize. We had three companies involved, and each was given a single objective. The command was simple: "Take it." During the course of the night while I monitored the battle, I heard reports come in. Alpha at checkpoint one. Charlie at checkpoint one. And finally, Alpha, mission complete. Objective taken. Charlie, mission complete. Objective taken.

But during all this, one thing became obvious. We hadn't heard anything from Bravo. Where was Bravo? What had happened? There were no communication checks at all. They hadn't made their checkpoints, and they certainly hadn't taken their objective.

Finally, about the break of dawn, Bravo was located. The commander had become disoriented and hadn't been able to fix his location by terrain. They kept radio silence because they hadn't made the checkpoint. The night was just plain dark, and this was before global positioning devices. They had failed in their mission because they had failed to plan for the environment – the darkness. They also hadn't practiced proper land navigation techniques.

It all sounds familiar. We are certain as we live our lives we will succeed. That everything will be OK. Then the chaos of life hits us, and we are not so sure.

What is right? What is wrong? What are values? Does it even matter?

It is all so disturbing and confusing. Soon we lose our morale compass and are lost and wandering in the darkness. The worst of it is we may cease to care. We may continue to plod on toward what we believe is the objective, but we can never be certain using these techniques.

How can we find the dawn so we can reorient ourselves to reality? Let me counsel you to find a guide. Look outside yourself for time-enduring truths. Avoid pop solutions that haven't been tested.

There are reasons ancient wisdom is ancient. There is also a reason why we still know about it. Most ancient wisdom has proved itself valuable. It is still recognized as changing lives.

Jesus, who is the main subject of the New Testament, said long ago, "What do you gain in life, if you win it all and lose yourself in the process." He really was saying look to the long view in life.

Get a morale compass, and don't do things which cause you to become someone you are not. Find a lifestyle that brings you closer to the God who cares for you. Don't miss your objective and fail your mission in life.

When you're lost in the dark, pray for a little light.

Mandatory fun

"OK, men, we're getting ready to move out," the armor commander said to his troops. "You're going to need a few things – your beret for garrison activities and going to the PX, your soft-cap in the field for chow, your watch-cap for PT, your Kevlar in case we have to fight on the ground and your CVC helmet inside the tank. After this formation, we'll line up at the seam shop to have our extra heads sewn on."



Japanese Words

ON-NA "Woman"
O-TO-KO "Man"
KO-DO-MO "Child"
O-CHA "Tea"
YU-KEE "Snow"
ARI-GA-TO "Thank You"
O-HAI-YO "Good Morning"
KON-NICH-I-WA "Good Day" (after 10 a.m.)
KOM-BAN-WA "Good Evening"
SHO-KO "Officer"
HEI-TAI "Soldier"
DAY-WA MA-TA "See you later"
KO-RE This
SO-RE "That"
NO-MI-MA-SU "Drink"



Weather

Four-day weather forecast for Camp Higashi-Chitose

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Hi 26	Hi 26	Hi 26	Hi 39
Lo 21	Lo 24	Lo 24	Lo 26
Partly cloudy	Partly cloudy	Partly cloudy	Partly cloudy